

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER

Villianur Main Road, Lawsthottam, Reddiarpalayam, Puducherry-605 010

Phone: (0413) 2292204, 2292205 Email: jtceo_pondicherry@eci.gov.in

No.E.47/1/2026-GEPLA 2026

Puducherry, dt. 15.03.2026

GENERAL ELECTIONS TO THE PUDUCHERRY LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, 2026

PRESS NOTE

Election Commission of India has announced the Schedule for General Elections to the Puducherry Legislative Assembly, 2026 on 15.03.2026. The Poll schedule is as follows:-

Sl. No.	Poll Event	Date
1.	Issue of Gazette Notification	16.03.2026 (Monday)
2.	Last date for making Nominations	23.03.2026 (Monday)
3.	Scrutiny of nominations	24.03.2026 (Tuesday)
4.	Last date for withdrawal of candidature	26.03.2026 (Thursday)
5.	Date of Poll	09.04.2026 (Thursday)
6.	Counting of Votes on	04.05.2026 (Monday)
7.	Date before which election shall be completed	06.05.2026 (Wednesday)

MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT

- The Model Code of Conduct comes into effect immediately from today (i.e., 15.03.2026) and shall remain in force till the completion of election process.
- The Model Code of Conduct will be applicable to all the Political Parties, all the Candidates, the Government and the Government Officials/servants.
- The Political Parties are requested to abide by the Model Code and extend their co-operation for conduct of free, fair and peaceful election that is free of hostilities, acrimony and does not give room for bitterness.
- The hoardings and banners displaying political advertisements are being removed. In terms of Section 4 of The Pondicherry Open Places (Prevention of Disfigurement) Act, 2000 (POPPD Act, 2000) "*no person shall deface any place open to public view by writing or marking with ink, chalk, paint or any other material except for the purpose of indicating the name and for such other purpose as may be specified in the said notification*". Action for violation of this provision will be initiated on the basis of complaint from the owners. The police is also bound to register cases.
- The Political Parties are requested to extend their full co-operation for removal of advertisements and defacements in public places.

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- Attention of the Political Parties and Candidates is invited to Letter No. 437/6/INST /ECI/FUNCT /MCC/2024 (Election Manifestos) dated 02.01.2024 of the ECI, relating to MCC provisions regarding welfare schemes contained in Election Manifesto and shall ensure strict adherence to the guidelines issued by the Election Commission in this regard.
- All Secretaries to Government and Heads of Departments/ Boards/Corporations were sensitized on MCC.
- Government Servants have been warned not to participate in any political activity. Any complaint against erring Government servants will be dealt with sternly. Besides taking disciplinary action under Service Rules against those Government servants participating in political activities, criminal action would also be instituted under section 223 of BNS.
- All Officers / officials, including Police engaged in the conduct of elections shall be deemed to be on deputation to the Election Commission of India as per section 13CC of Representation of People Act, 1950 and would discharge their duties in an impartial manner without fear or favor. Their performance would be under constant scrutiny of the Commission.

ELECTORAL ROLLS

- The final Electoral Rolls with reference to 01.01.2026 as qualifying date were published on 14.02.2026.
- As on 15.03.2026, the total number of electors is 9,48,977 (Male: 4,45,761; Female: 5,03,076 and Third Gender: 140) This includes 1665 NRI Voters (Male 1326 ; Female 339) and 327 Service voters (Male 305; Female 22). Totally 13802 PwD Voters (Men 7478; Women 6323 and TG 1).
- After the publication of the final electoral roll, applications for addition, deletion and correction which are received will be added after processing.
- After announcement of Election, applications for Deletion and Modifications will not be entertained.

POLLING STATION

- Rationalization of Polling Stations in the U.T. of Puducherry has been completed.
- After rationalization, 1099 Polling Stations have been proposed, subject to the approval of Election Commission of India.
- 18 Polling stations have been re-located and the nomenclatures of 115 Polling Stations have been changed. The details will be available in CEO & DEO website shortly.

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- 4934 staff will be involved in election duties. 5410 police personnel of Puducherry Police will be involved.
- Each polling station has a maximum of 1200 electors.

ASSURED MINIMUM FACILITY

- It has been ensured that all the polling stations are provided with Assured minimum facilities such as adequate furniture, help desk, electricity and proper lighting, provision for ramp, proper signage, toilet, provision for drinking water ramps, shades, approach roads etc.,

ADDITIONAL FACILITIES FOR PWDS

- All polling stations will be mapped with the disabled voters in their respective polling stations.
- Facilitation services such as wheel chairs and adjustable tables will be provided for orthopedically handicapped.
- For visually impaired, hearing impaired and speech impaired, Trained volunteers who have undergone special education will be stationed at select booths.
- Braille ballot papers will be kept in each Polling Station for the use of visually challenged electors and they will also be permitted to take one companion if they desire so.
- PwD voters can seek assistance through Shaksham App developed by ECI.
- Student volunteers with vehicles will provide one to one service to the disabled right from taking them to the Polling Station till their return back to home on demand by the PwD Electors.

MODEL POLLING STATIONS:

ALL WOMEN MANAGED POLLING STATION:

30 All women Polling Stations will be set up which will be managed by Women Govt. Servants.

YOUTH MANAGED POLLING STATION:

5 Polling Stations (**3** PS in Puducherry District and **2** PS in Karaikal District) will be set up and the same will be managed by Young Govt. Servants.

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ALL PWD MANAGED POLLING STATION:

3 Polling Stations (**2** PS in Puducherry District and **1** PS in Karaikal District) will be set up and the same will be managed by Govt. Servants under the category of Persons with Disabilities to encourage PwD electors.

UNIQUE POLLING STATION:

Two Unique polling station would be set up in each of the districts of Puduherry and Karaikal. In Puducherry VOC Government Boys Hr. Sec. School, Puducherry is identified as Unique Polling Station and in Karaikal, Thanthai Periyar School is identified as Unique Poling Station, owing to its Franco-Tamil Architectural Heritage and recent Restoration/Redevelopment of the same.

VOTING OF SERVICE VOTERS/GOVERNMENT SERVANTS ON ELECTION DUTY

- All Service voters will be provided ballots through Electronically Transmitted Postal Ballot System (ETPBS)
- Postal Ballot facilities will be extended to all the Government Servants on duty for their voting in their respective facilitation centre.

ELECTRONIC VOTING MACHINES & VVPATs:

- ECI has allotted BEL made M3 EVMs/VVPATs to U.T of Puducherry. Totally 3349 BUs (304%), 1801 CUs (164%) and 2046 (186%) VVPATs are available in Puducherry UT.
- Sufficient quantity of EVMs & VVPATs are available and will be used in all Polling stations.
- The First Level Checking of EVMs/VVPATs had been carried out in the presence of Political Parties.
- EVM - VVPAT demonstration was given through EVM Demonstration Centres to the Electors in all the four regions of UT of Puducherry. 28019 People came to the EVM demonstration Centre and cast their vote.
- Intensive awareness campaigns to familiarize and sensitize people on the use of EVM - VVPATs have been carried out through Mobile Demonstration Van in all the Polling Station Locations of each Assembly Constituency. 7309 people cast their vote in Mobile Demonstration Van.

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LAW & ORDER

- Police Department, in co-ordination with District Election Officer, will be putting in place Bandobast arrangements at all Polling Stations.
- About **321** vulnerable areas have been tentatively identified by Police. The pockets will be constantly monitored by periodically reviewing the ground level situation.
- Police have been directed to execute 37 pending NBWs and impound the pending 30 arms except those used for bank security.
- They have also been directed to invoke Section **126 & 129** of BNSS for binding down trouble mongers.
- Sufficient strength of CAPF (Central Armed Police Force) has been sought. 10 companies of CAPF have been deployed so far. 45 Companies are expected to reach Puducherry soon.
- Police Department has been directed to hold Inter-State Co-ordination meeting with neighbouring states.

ELECTION EXPENDITURE MONITORING

- Puducherry is an Expenditure sensitive UT from elections point of view.
- Flying Squads, Static Surveillance Teams, Video Surveillance Teams, Rolling Static Surveillance team will function from today.
- Apart from this Expenditure Monitoring Cell, Video Viewing Team, Accounting Team will function.
- The State Level / District Level Media Certification and Monitoring Committee have been constituted have already started functioning for pre-certification of Political advertisements and to keep watch over instances of Paid News.
- No advertisement shall be published or telecast without prior certification obtained from DL-MCMC.

COMPLAINT REDRESSAL MECHANISM-CALL CENTER

- The State/District Contact Centre at Puducherry and District Contact Centre at Karaikal have been established with Toll Free Number 1950.
- Both of these will be operational 24 × 7.
- 1950 will be a single source for availing the bundle of election services apart from registering complaints.
- Electors may log on to voters.eci.gov.in to find their sl.no. part no., location of the Polling Station and the contact details of their BLO.

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- The District Contact Centres are already established by the respective District Election Officers.
- Web based online complaints can also be registered through NGSP portal.
- The Deputy District Election Officers will personally monitor the Contact Centres in the respective districts.
- All the complaint monitoring systems are integrated with ECINET portal (in election seizure monitoring system module) of ECI.

SYSTEMATIC VOTER EDUCATION & AWARENESS PROGRAMME (SVEEP)

1) **MEIPORUL 2.0:** We are announcing the launch of "Meiporul 2.0", an enhanced and more comprehensive version of the "Meiporul" initiative introduced during the 2024 Lok Sabha Elections. The project aims to address the growing challenge of misinformation and disinformation related to elections.

The initiative focuses on sensitizing the public to pause, verify, and proceed before sharing or believing any forwarded messages, especially those related to elections. Its primary objective is to build a vigilant and responsible public, encouraging citizens not to believe or circulate election-related information without verifying it through the official websites and social media handles of the Election Commission of India and the Elections Department, Puducherry.

As part of this project, a dedicated social media monitoring cell will function 24×7 to track election-related content across platforms and take necessary action, in accordance with the directions and guidelines of the Election Commission of India.

Today, we are officially launching "Meiporul 2.0" with a video, marking an important step towards ensuring credible information and responsible digital engagement during the election period.

2) COUNT THE CARBON 2.0

Like the 2024 Lok Sabha Elections, where efforts were made to reduce the carbon footprint of the election process, similar measures will be followed in the 2026 elections with greater focus. Accordingly, several measures will be undertaken, including the reuse of materials, the use of sustainable and eco-friendly alternatives

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wherever possible, and the rationalization of vehicles and other resources to minimize emissions.

Further, through targeted interventions under Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) and the #WalkToVote campaign, voters will be encouraged to walk to their polling stations and exercise their franchise, thereby contributing to a greener and more sustainable electoral process.

These initiatives aim to promote environmental responsibility while strengthening democratic participation.

3) CREATING A FESTIVE ATMOSPHERE FOR VOTING – This year, through targeted SVEEP activities, we aim to create a festive atmosphere around the electoral process, where people can enjoy and actively participate in the journey of voting.

Initiatives such as VR polling station experiences, cultural events, and various programmes will be organized to engage the public and raise awareness about the importance of voting.

Through these efforts, we aspire to make the 2026 elections a celebration of democracy - "தேர்தல் திருவிழா, புதுச்சேரியின் பெருவிழா", encouraging the people of Puducherry to participate with enthusiasm and pride in the democratic process.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVES

- As in the previous elections, the Poll Day happenings in all the 1099 Polling Stations in the Union Territory will be web cast. The important events and Poll data will be captured online by customized software application.
- I.P. Cameras will be installed in critical polling stations to monitor the happenings at the vicinity of the polling stations.

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C-VIGIL

- c-Vigil is mobile application which allows general public to report Model Code of Conduct and Election Expenditure violations as messages, photos or videos. On receipt of the complaint, dedicated Flying Squads will inspect the complaint location immediately and necessary action will be taken within 100 minutes.

SUVIDHA:

- Suvidha is an on-line portal for candidates/political parties to enable them to submit on-line application seeking prior permission for the conduct of meetings/political campaigns, file nominations etc.,

KYC

- Know Your Candidate (KYC) is an app rolled out by the ECI for allowing the elector to know about the contesting candidates in the Parliamentary Constituency. Particulars about the Candidates will be available once the nomination process starts. Citizens, particularly the youth, are requested to use the App and cast their vote as an Informed Voter.

ESMS

- Election Seizure Management System (ESMS) is a digital platform developed by the Election Commission of India to record, track, and monitor the seizure of illegal cash, liquor, drugs, and other inducements during elections in real time.

SAKSHAM

- The Election Commission of India Saksham website/app is an online platform that provides voter services and assistance for persons with disabilities (PwD) so they can easily register and participate in elections. The PwD Electors may utilize the portal for accessing the polling station.

TREND DISSEMINATION SYSTEM FOR COUNTING

- The Trend Dissemination System (TDS) of the Election Commission of India is a web-based system used to display and share real-time counting trends and election results with officials, media, and the public during vote counting.

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ECINET

- ECINET is the One-stop Digital Platform designed by ECI comprising c-Vigil, Suvidha, Saksham, ESMS, TDS etc.,

ECI'S NEW INITIATIVES

- Arrangements were made for deposition of Cellular phones in all the Polling Stations. The electors may deposit their cellular phones in the polling station premises and shall collect the same after casting their vote.
- On Poll Day, Candidates Booths were allowed just outside 100m of polling station to issue slip with serial number and part number to the electors instead of 200m in the previous election.

NEW INITIATIVES IN PUDUCHERRY UT

- Body camera will be provided to the team leader of FST to capture live feed of seizure.

PROOF OF IDENTIFICATION DURING POLL:

- The Commission will allow alternate documents (such as Passport, driving license, Service Identity Card with photograph, Passbook with photograph, PAN card, Smart Card, MNREGA job card, Health Insurance Smart Card, Pension document with photograph, Official Identity card issued to MPs/MLAs and Aadhaar Card) for the purpose of identification at polling station. Instructions in this regard will be shared once issued by the Commission.
- The Commission has now directed that henceforth the Voter Information Slip issued by Election machinery will not be accepted **as a stand-alone identification document for voting**. Therefore, the voter should necessarily produce either EPIC or any one of the permitted alternative documents along with the voter slip.
- In respect of NRI voters, original passport alone will be accepted as an identification document.

P. JAWAHAR, IAS
CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER